

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7086

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION GENEVA

USUN NEW YORK 396

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOTOTA 8910

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, GW, CO, VE

SUBJ: FRG PROPOSALS ON INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

REF: STATE 196812, BOGOTA 7638, CARACAS 10276

1. FRG CHARGE WAGNER INFORMED EMBASSY ON AUG 23 THAT HE HAD RECENTLY PRESENTED FRG INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM PROPOSAL TO COLOMBIAN FONOFF SECRETARY GENERAL CARLOS BORDA AND TO UNDERSECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CONFERENCES JOAQUIN FONSECA. WAGNER SAID REACTIONS OF BOTH, WHOM HE SAW SEPARATELY, WERE VERY POSITIVE. HE DID NOT LEARN OF GOC INTENTIONS REGARDING ITS OWN TERRORISM RESOLUTION, WHICH IT MAY PRESENT JOINTLY WITH VENEZUELA AT THE 31ST UNGA.

2. AT THE END OF A SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION ANOTHER MATTERS WITH ACTING UNDERSECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CONFERENCES, ALVARO BONILLA, POL COUNSELOR ENQUIRED ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE COLOMBIA-VENEZUELA RESOLUTION. BONILLA SAID THAT COLOMBIA'S PROPOSED DRAFT RESOLUTION WAS IN CONFIDENTIAL

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CARACAS, FOR GOV COMMENTS. HE DESCRIBED THE COLOMBIAN DRAFT

AS A MOTION WHICH WOULD CONDEMN SEVERAL SPECIFIC TERRORIST ACTS BUT WHICH WOULD NOT ATTEMPT A DEFINITION OF TERRORISM.

3. BONILLA THEN REMARKED THAT THE FRG EMBASSY HAD DISCUSSED THE FRG PROPOSAL WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, WHICH VIEWED THE PROPOSAL VERY FAVORABLY. BONILLA SAID THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WAS EVEN CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITY OF COMBINING THE COLOMBIA-VENEZUELA AND THE FRG PROPOSALS. HE OPINED, HOWEVER, THAT VENEZUELAN AGREEMENT TO SUCH A COMBINED INITIATIVE, WHICH WOULD PROBABLY BE SOMEWHAT TOUGHER THAN THAT CONTEMPLATED BY A COLOMBIA-VENEZUELA RESOLUTION, MIGHT BE DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN BECAUSE OF WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS VENEZUELA'S RELUCTANCE TO ANTAGONIZE ITS ARAB PARTNERS IN OPEC. POL COUNSELOR MADE NO COMMENT ON FRG PROPOSAL.

4. COMMENT. BASED ON DESCRIPTIONS AVAILABLE TO US OF THE FRG AND COLOMBIA-VENEZUELA PROPOSALS, IT SEEMS DOUBTFUL THAT THEY ARE SUFFICIENTLY COMPATIBLE FOR COMBINATION INTO A SINGLE INITIATIVE, SUCH AS BONILLA ENVISAGED.

5. REGARDING THE FRG PROPOSAL, IN OUR PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH GOC OFFICIALS ABOUT A CONVENTION AGAINST INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, THEIR POSITION HAS BEEN THAT A CONVENTION, WITH PROVISIONS FOR EXTRADITION AND PROSECUTION OF TERRORISTS, WOULD STAND LITTLE CHANCE OF ATTRACTING BROAD SUPPORT. THE COLOMBIANS SEE THEIR PROPOSAL AS AT LEAST HAVING THE MERIT OF FORCING COUNTRIES TO "TAKE A STAND" ON SPECIFIC TERRORIST ACTS, WHILE AVOIDING UNPRODUCTIVE DEBATE. ANOTHER, UNSTATED, CONSIDERATION BEHIND THE COLOMBIAN PREFERENCE FOR THEIR MORE LIMITED, CONDEMNATORY MOTION MAY WELL BE THE DESIRE TO AVOID OFFENDING ARAB OIL PRODUCING COUNTRIES -A SIMILAR CONSIDERATION TO THAT IMPUTED BY BONILLA TO THE VENEZUELAN. COLOMBIAN CONCERN FOR THE SENSIBILITIES OF THE ARAB STATES HAS BEEN INDICATED TO US IN THE PAST BY FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS, WHO HAVE ATTRIBUTED COLOMBIA'S ABSTENTIONS IN THE U.N. ON THE ANTI-ZIONIST RESOLUTION AND ON CERTAIN PLO ISSUES. IN PART TO A RELUCTANCE TO ANTAGONIZE THESE COUNTRIES. ANOTHER CONSIDERATION LIKELY TO AFFECT COLOMBIA'S POSITION ON TERRORISM IS THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE, ENUNCIATED BY FOREIGN MINISTER LIEVANO, OF COLOMBIA'S

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DESIRE TO AVOID ASSOCIATING ITSELF WITH COMPETING BLOCS.

6. ON BALANCE, IT WOULD SEEM THAT COLOMBIA WOULD PROBABLY FIND IT DIFFICULT TO SUPPORT AN INITIATIVE SUCH AS THAT OF THE FRG. THE COLOMBIAN PROPOSAL, AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, PROBABLY GOES AS FAR AS COLOMBIA IS WILLING TO GO AT THIS TIME IN ITS DESIRE TO ADDRESS THE TERRORIST ISSUE. ALSO, IN DISCUSSING THEIR OWN ANTI-TERRORIST RESOLUTION WITH US, FOREIGN OFFICIALS HAVE

INDICATED THAT, WHILE THEY WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR VOTING SUPPORT FROM THE LARGE, INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES, THEY WOULD PREFER THAT COSPONSORS AND ACTIVE PROPONENTS OF THE COLOMBIAN-VENEZUELAN RESOLUTION BE LARGELY FROM SMALLER OR THIRD-WORLD COUNTRIES, AN ATTITUDE WHICH COULD ALSO AFFECT COLOMBIAN SUPPRT FOR THE FRG INITIATIVE.

7. IF BOTH FRG AND COLOMBIAN-VENEZUELAN ANTI-TERRORIST INITIATIVES ARE PRESENTED SEPARATELY AT THE 31ST UNGA, THE EFFECT MAY WELL BE TO DRAW OFF POTENTIAL SUPPORT FROM THAT OF THE FRG, IN FAVOR OF THE LATTER, WHICH SOME COUNTRIES WOULD PROBABLY HAVE LESS TROUBLE SUPPORTING. IF THIS ASSUMPTION IS CORRECT, IT MIGHT THEN BE DESIRABLE THAT ONLY ONE OF THESE NITIATIVES BE PRESENTED AT THIS SESSION OF THE UNGA.
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